

**INTRODUCTION**

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Senator Liu held the first Early Learning and Child Care Roundtable to discuss the impact of state child care budget cuts on current and next fiscal year programs and explore and develop strategies and solutions to fill budget gaps.

**VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

Chart a course toward sustainable and universal childcare and early childhood education.

**PRINCIPLES**

Cuts should be made in a way that permits the system to survive, perhaps with a reduced number of children being served.

Child care and early learning programs should provide consistent, continuous, stable care for families.

Child care and early learning programs should reduce the school readiness gap.

Low-income families should have priority access to high quality child care.

**STRATEGIES**

Integrate early education and child care programs.

Elevate stature, training, and pay for early education and child care providers.

Replicate best practices and programs from other states.

**ACTION ITEMS**

Child care advocates and Senator Liu's office will educate policy makers such as the Governor, legislative committees, and Congress on the importance of child care for working families and the economy.

Child care advocates and legislators will urge and join the Governor's office to aggressively lobby the Congress to continue '09 and '10 Federal funding levels.

Senator Liu's office will encourage communication between CDE and DSS.

Child care providers and organizations will look to look to the private sector to mitigate the dramatic reductions in services.

Senator Liu will speak to colleagues (specifically Senators Leno, Evans, and Corbett) about holding similar child care roundtable discussions in their districts.

Child care advocates will educate Superintendents of school districts about ways to best utilize Title I funds for preschool programs.

**LEGISLATION**

*Improve frequency of child care site visits*, by taking a focused approach. Reduce the time CDSS spends doing each visit by only reviewing key indicators instead of conducting a lengthy visit. This proposal was made by CDSS last year in April finance letters. Annual inspections for licenses centers currently occur every five to seven years and using key indicators will reduce the time for each and increase the frequency of inspections. Assemblymember Mitchell will be carrying a bill to make this change.

*Simplify cost structure, payment, and reimbursements* for families. Assemblymember Portantino is considering legislation to do this.

**BUDGET TRAILER PROPOSALS**

The following proposals have been brought to the attention of the Senate Budget Committee Staff. They will review the options and present the most feasible for consideration at the February 2<sup>nd</sup> budget hearing and the hearing to consider the Governor's realignment proposal.

**State Contracted Centers**

1. *Move the After School Education and Safety Program (ASES) to CDE's Child Development Division* in effort to provide maximum continuity of care and access for low-income, school-aged children.
2. *Simplify access and utilization of existing State Preschool and General Child Care programs* to improve access for families and administration for program providers. The state can centralize child care funds into a single contract and give funds to the local program operators to make decisions.
3. *Collapse State Preschool and General Child Care* into one program. It was argued that these programs operate under similar standards. Consolidation could change the budget structure and increase efficiency. It could also allow child care programs to serve younger children and expand flexibility while preventing annual unspent dollars from being returned to the General Fund. Senator Liu's office will ask CDE for the dollar amount and percent of state preschool funds not spent each year. A number of concerns have been raised about this proposal.  
History: AB 2759 (Jones, 2007-2008). This law consolidates and streamlines existing General Child Care child development programs that serve preschool-aged children; but does not include infants, toddler, and remaining school-aged children.

**Alternative Payment (AP) Programs**

1. *Simplify access and case management for families seeking childcare*. Consider aligning AP contracts to Resource and Referral Service Areas in order to increase access for families to AP services.
2. Include language, if necessary, *authorizing temporary use of federal funds* to pay for stage 3 child care for January 1 to March 31<sup>st</sup> until 60 million dollars of CDD identified, reverted child care funds can be authorized and appropriated.